

Sermon Summary 04/26/2015

Romans 15:5-6, 13. "United Around the Gospel" by Aaron Lewis

In Short: Paul asks that very diverse groups be united in Christ to God's glory through the endurance, encouragement, and hope that only God can give.

Sunday's Outline

1. Unity in the gospel requires dying to self.
 - a. Unity requires setting aside our personal desires and preferences.
 - b. This feels like suffering! It requires endurance and encouragement from God.
 - c. Dying to self is an impossible task for our selves to accomplish. We need what only God can do.
 - d. Our common salvation in Christ and the beauty of the gospel is vastly more important than the things that typically divide us.
2. Unity in the gospel glorifies God.
 - a. We should display such a stunning unity that those outside have no choice but to confess that God is with us.
 - b. This doesn't mean we will all think alike or share the same opinions and preferences. It means we are together focused on something greater: God's glory.
3. Unity in the gospel is fueled by hope.
 - a. Biblical hope rests on God's promises, which are sure.
 - b. Even trials and suffering build hope. Remember how God has worked in our past.

Conclusion: Benedictions are a bridge between our neediness and God's generosity. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge is a tremendous human accomplishment, but it pales in comparison to God's creative genius and grace in salvation. When God creates a supernatural unity in us that is focused on Christ, the world will notice and the gospel will spread.

Help for Understanding & Application

- 1) The culture of Paul's day was sharply divided between Jew and Gentile. That is not as much an issue for us at Zionsville Fellowship, yet we too have distinctions that can divide us. What are some factors or issues in our body that could destroy the unity Paul envisioned?
- 2) Are there ever "desires and preferences" we have that should *not* be set aside for the sake of unity? If so, what distinguishes them from obstacles to biblical unity? What is it that makes our petty desires and preferences be seen for what they really are?
- 3) Do we really believe that the unity of Romans 15:5-6 requires an act of God? Is this reflected in the things we ask for when we pray? How *should* we pray in light of Romans 15:5-6?
- 4) Biblical hope rests on God's promises, which are sure. How do the following passages give you hope that the unity of Romans 15 can truly happen? John 17:20-23, Ephesians 5:25-27, Philippians 1:6.
- 5) Discuss some things God is calling you to do as we seek such harmony within Zionsville Fellowship and within the universal Church that we glorify God with one voice, filled with hope, joy, peace, and the power of the Holy Spirit. This can be a time of both repentance and encouragement.